

Our community gives heartfelt thanks to Mr. Stephens for his lifelong commitment to education and his ongoing dedication to public service. He is an asset to our community, and I want to thank Mr. Stephens for his years of hard work and selfless dedication and congratulate him on a well-deserved retirement.

THE WATER ENHANCEMENT SECURITY ACT

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2001

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I join with Mr. CALVERT today in introducing the "Water Enhancement Security Act". This bill is the culmination of almost one decade of work by the Congress and the state Legislature, federal and state agencies and the California business community, agricultural and urban water districts and environmental groups.

For years, the water system in California seems to have been "broken"—our main water system, the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and San Francisco Bay has been in a state of crisis due to conflicts between environmental protection, water use and water quality. In a state where we seem to either feast on water or famine without water, the drought of 1987–92 demonstrated just how vulnerable California is to water shortages, and the flood of 1997 demonstrated how vulnerable we are to the effects of flooding. Frequent conflicts between water quality, fish protection and water supply magnify the problem and demonstrate just how little "give" there is in our current system. With the state's population expected to grow from 34 million today to 59 million in 2040, the need to conserve, to better manage our existing supplies and to attain greater storage capacity is critical.

Despite the years of recognition by most Californians as to the need to attain these goals, no major achievement in our water policy had taken place since the 1960s, when, under Governor Pat Brown's leadership, the State Water Project was conceived. That was, however, until CalFed was formed in 1994.

In response to the water conflicts and the feast or famine predicament that we were under, the state and federal Administrations began talks, known as "CalFed". Over a period of years, 18 state and federal agencies have conducted hundreds of meetings, public hearings and negotiations with stakeholders regarding ways to better manage the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta for those who depend upon it, as well as ways to restore the Bay-Delta's ecosystem. It seemed that there was everything to lose and everything to be gained—as the hub of California's water supply, the

Last year, I worked closely with California Governor Gray Davis and then Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt on a package that would move the CalFed program forward. Then, in June, 2000, Governor Davis and Secretary of Interior Babbitt announced a historic blueprint—the CalFed Framework for Action, followed by the Record of Decision in July, 2000. The legislation being introduced today is the crucial next step for the program. It authorizes the CalFed program to move forward, and expands this blueprint to other regions of the state.

Balance is the cornerstone of this bill. This bill ensures a long-lasting balanced program with the visionary and innovative approach of linking progress on water supply and water quality with progress to the environment, and with linking environmental progress to improvements in water supply and water quality. This theme of balance is echoed throughout the bill—there is balance in the structure for governance, balance in ecosystem/non-ecosystem programming, balance among the various regions of the state and balance in funding.

The bill is comprehensive and action-oriented. This bill provides real, tangible improvements for the environment, water quality and water supply throughout California. It commits to desperately needed additional surface and groundwater storage by authorizing water supply, water quality and flood control infrastructure improvements for a system that hasn't seen any major improvements in over 30 years. It contains short-term water supply improvements for water users that rely upon Delta exports and that have been disproportionately impacted by federal regulatory requirements. It expands environmental restoration projects in wetlands, the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Bay Delta estuary, and rivers and streams. It expands and funds state-of-the-art water recycling and conservation programs throughout California. Each of these program elements is essential to improving the reliability and quality of California's water supply.

We are at a crossroad in California, as well as in most other regions of the country. For decades, we have benefited from the foresight of our predecessors—in their vision of what infrastructure would be necessary to meet our energy needs, our water needs, our transportation needs, our educational needs. I believe that it's time for us to exercise that same leadership, that same vision. I believe that it is time to prepare our generation and the generations that will follow us for the future. In meeting these needs, I believe that we can benefit from the things that we have learned over the last several decades about how to better protect the environment and about how to better conserve, while at the same time, providing for greater economic progress. This bill charts a course for attaining that vision.

I want to thank Mr. CALVERT for his leadership and efforts. I know that he and his staff have worked tirelessly to craft a fair and balanced program. I am committed, and I know that Mr. CALVERT is committed as well, to continue to work with Senator FEINSTEIN on her bill, and with the state and federal agencies and Administrations, and with all stakeholders on refinements to the bill to ensure that its potential benefits are met.

INTERVIEW WITH UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT LEONID KUCHMA

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2001

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call to the attention of my colleagues a recent interview with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma which appeared in The International Jerusalem Post on May 11, 2001. This important interview discusses a wide range of matters

from Ukraine's cooperation with NATO to its relations with Israel to its current state of economic development. The interview also provides President Kuchma an opportunity to respond to some of the criticism recently leveled against him.

I ask that the article be printed at this point in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the International Jerusalem Post,
May 11, 2001]

THE VIEW FROM KIEV

UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT LEONID KUCHMA TALKS ABOUT HIS COUNTRY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL, THE SOMETIMES TROUBLED PAST OF ITS JEWISH COMMUNITY, AND ITS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FUTURE

(By Thomas A. Rose)

Mr. President, thank you for agreeing to share your thoughts with our readers. Your administration has come under increasing criticism from opponents who accuse your government of everything from failing to implement meaningful economic reform to suppressing press freedoms and even to charges that you were personally involved in the death of a prominent journalist. As a result, many in the West, particularly the United States, have started to question your country's political stability. How would you respond to these charges and concerns?

Politically, Ukraine is both stable and predictable. Industrial production is up, financial markets are improved, our agricultural sector is showing great promise, and we are beginning to see real progress in our effort to redress social contradictions.

Governmental bodies and the local authorities are functioning normally.

The world must know of the tremendous progress we have made and of the tremendous progress we will make. Our state is only 10 years old. In that short time, we have developed a functioning democracy, a free press, an independent financial system, and have become the first nation in history to voluntarily renounce and destroy its nuclear weapons' capability. These are not small accomplishments.

Regarding the attacks against me personally, I would call it more of an aggravation than a crisis. It is the demonstration and consequence of the situational uniting and stirring up of different forces and particular persons—political outsiders if you will—who are out for revenge and the redistribution of power through unconstitutional means.

Unfortunately, all the attention their outlandish charges are gaining in the West has emboldened them to think that they can threaten even the most considerable achievements of our Ukrainian nation, which are independence and sovereignty. Their ambition is to gain power for themselves. Yet, as you would say, the proof is in the pudding.

Domestically, which with all due respect, is the political realm to which I am responsible, these people cannot find support.

As to the so called "demonstrations" which have been well reported in the West, a few thousand paid participants in these protests do not have the key role and do not determine the general frames of mind of the Ukrainian people. In fact, things in this regard seem to have peaked on March 9. This has no doubt frightened the agitators, which is the very reason why they are trying to internationalize their cause.

However, I would be insincere if I do not say that artificial, purposeful, and excess politicization does not weaken our country and its ability to tackle the huge social and economic problems we face.